THE HUMAN TORCH
10¢
NO. 29
COMICS
SOME ACTING, EH, TORCH?
FLAME ON, TORO! I'M NOT SO SURE THAT IS ACTING!
IF I CANNOT HAVE YOU, MY DEAR, NO ONE ELSE SHALL!
HE WAS THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMEDIAN... BUT HE WANTED TO PLAY TRAGEDY! AND HE FINALLY DID... BUT WAS HE ACTING WHEN HE SAID... "YOU'LL DIE LAUGHING!"

THE HUMAN TORCH

ON THAT MECCA OF GLAMOUR—HOLLYWOOD—PERSONAL AMBITIONS AND RIVALRY OFTEN SEETHE INTO TEMPESTS! AND OUT OF ONE GIRL'S RAGE EMERGES ONE OF THE MOST AUDACIOUS CRIMINALS EVER TO CHALLENGE THE FIRE—BRAND DUO—TORCH AND TORO! MEET THE SPECTACULAR...

"DAREDEVIL of CRIME!"

HEY, TORCH! SHE'S LETTING HER FALL! SHE'LL BE KILLED!

1750

AT THE SUPERMONT MOVIE STUDIO IN HOLLYWOOD..

THE SHOOTING ON YOUR SERIES OF "CRIME DOESN'T PAY" SHORTS WON'T BEGIN FOR AN HOUR, TORCH! MEANWHILE, WHY NOT WATCH US SHOOT ANOTHER PICTURE?

FINE, MR. OGLEBY!

TORCH AND TORO VIEW A THRILL-PACKED SCENE - A CARLOAD OF GUNMEN IN A SINISTER CHASE!

WE GOTTA GET THAT EMERALD NECKLACE! STOP HER!

AS BULLETS PUNCTURE THE PURSUED VICTIM'S CAR THE GIRL DRIVER MAKES A BREATH-TAKING MOVE...

...ELUDING THE KILLERS!

MISSED AGAIN! SHE GOT AWAY!

SOME PERFORMANCE! WHO IS THE GIRL?

STARRA, THE STUNT GIRL - STAND-IN FOR OUR STAR ADRIENNE KENMORE! YOU JUST SAW A SCENE FROM ADRIENNE'S LATEST PICTURE - "THE EMERALD NECKLACE MYSTERY!"

NICE WORK, STARRA... WE'LL CALL YOU IF ANY RETAKES ARE NEEDED LATER!

BUT WHAT ABOUT DOING A PICTURE OF MY OWN? I'VE BEEN ASKING YOU FOR WEEKS - I WANT BILLING!

THOSE THINGS TAKE TIME—ADRIENNE, TAKE YOUR PLACE AGAIN—PICK UP WHERE STARRA WAS RESCUED BY A PASSING BOAT!

I RISK MY NECK AND NOBODY KNOWS ME! EVEN THE NECKLACE I WEAR IS IMITATION, WHILE DEAR ADRIENNE WEARS A QUARTER MILLION DOLLAR GADGET ON HER NECK, BORROWED FROM A FAMOUS JEWEL COLLECTION! NOTHING TOO GOOD FOR **HER!**

I'VE HEARD ENOUGH, STARRA! ***YOU'RE FIRED! GET OUT!***

I QUIT! BUT I'LL BE A STAR YET, MR. OGLEBY! THE PUBLIC WILL KNOW ME! I'LL BE ***GREATER*** THAN ADRIENNE!

OH, DEAR...

SHE ***IS*** IN A STATE!

WE'LL JUST FORGET HER! I'LL GET YOU ANOTHER STAND-IN! TORCH, YOUR SET IS READY NOW. YOUR DIRECTOR'S SIGNALLING!

COME ON, TORO!

AS THE FAMED DUO PERFORMS...

I WONDER WHAT'LL HAPPEN TO STARRA?

KEEP YOUR MIND ON YOUR ACTING, LAD!

DOLLY THE CAMERAS! CLOSE-UP!

DIRECTOR

LATER, IN A CHEAP BOARDING HOUSE...

I HAVE GREAT TALENT—LOOKS—I ***MUST*** WIN FAME AND FORTUNE! BUT HOW? HOW?—HOW?

STARRA!

AN EXCITED LITTLE NEIGHBOR RUNS IN...

YOU SHOULDA SEEN WHAT HAPPENED! THE NASH'NAL BANK WAS HELD UP—THE ROBBERS GOT $100,000—AND RAN OUT, RIGHT SMACK INTO THE COPS! GEE, THOSE CROOKS BUNGLED IT!

THEY—YOU LOOK FUNNY, STARRA! IS SOMETHIN' WRONG?
OH, NO—RUN ALONG, TOMMY...
$100,000! A FORTUNE! THAT'S IT.! THAT'S THE WAY! WITH MY TALENT AND LOOKS, I WON'T BUNGLE! FAME AND FORTUNE!

A NIGHT VISIT TO THE UNDERWORLD, AND THE CRIME-BENT STUNT GIRL CORRALS AIDES!

A WEEK LATER FINDS TORCH AND TORO DONE WITH THEIR MOVIE CHORES, AND...

I DON'T LIKE HOLLYWOOD PARTIES! BUT SINCE IT'S OUR LAST NIGHT HERE AND ADRIENNE INSISTED...
SHE SAYS SHE HAS A SURPRISE! WONDER WHAT?

THIS IS THE SURPRISE! I BOUGHT THE EMERALD NECKLACE! PRACTICALLY PUT MYSELF IN HOCK FOR IT! BUT I ADORE IT!
WHEW! A QUARTER MILLION BUCKS WORTH!
GORGEOUS!

WHILE GUESTS OGLE BREATHLESSLY, OUTSIDE THE HOUSE...

SUDDENLY, INTO ADRIENNE'S HOUSE SPEEDILY SWINGS A STARTLING VISITOR!

I'LL TAKE THIS PRIZE!

QUICK, LAD! WE'VE WORK!

BUT...

HA-HA, FLAME-BIRDS! THIS IS PIE FOR ME!

RIPPING OFF THEIR OUTER GARMENTS, THE DUO REVERTS TO CYCLONIC FIGURES OF FLAME!

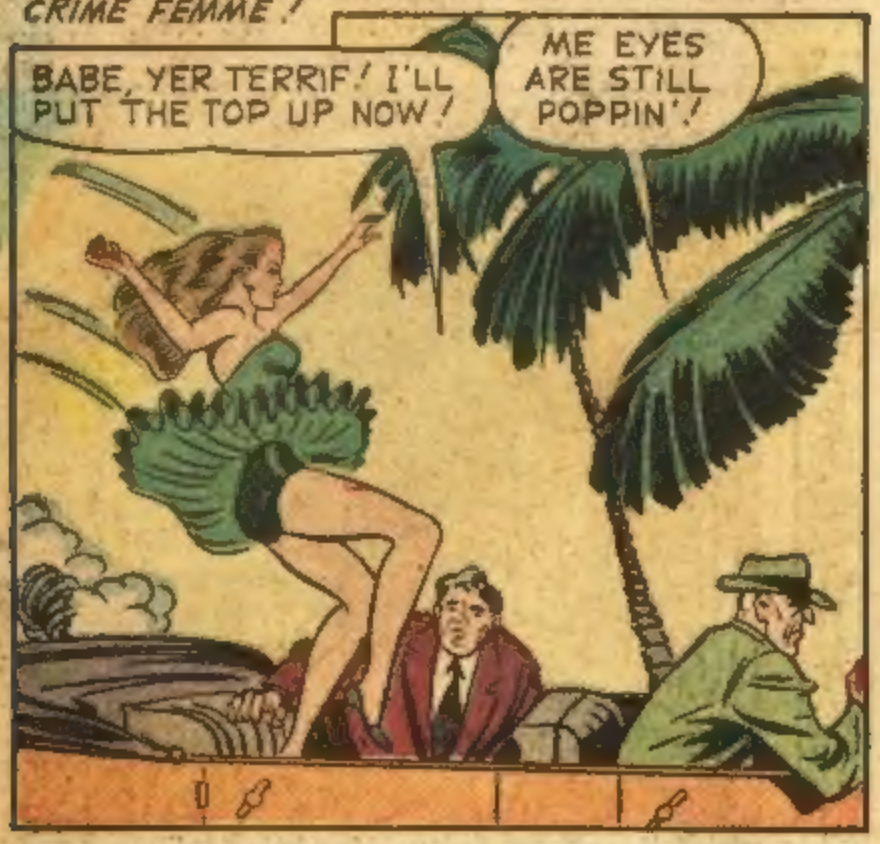
IT'S STARRA, ALL RIGHT!

SHE'S *ILL STARRED!* WE'LL STOP HER!

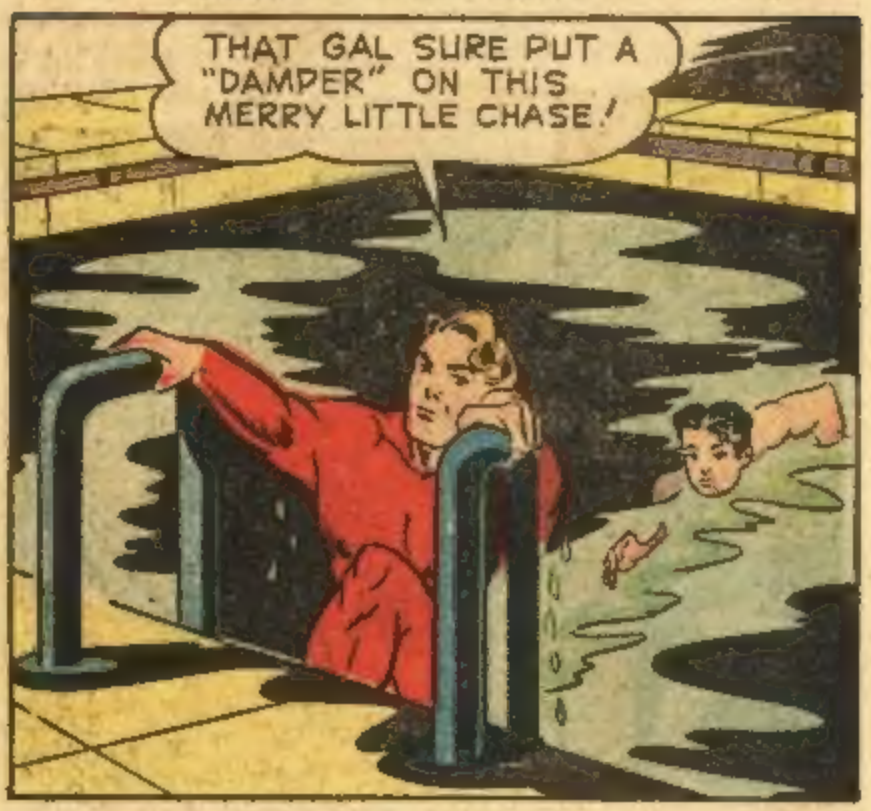
AS THE BANDIT EXECUTES A TRIPLE SOMERSAULT OVER A GARDEN WALL...

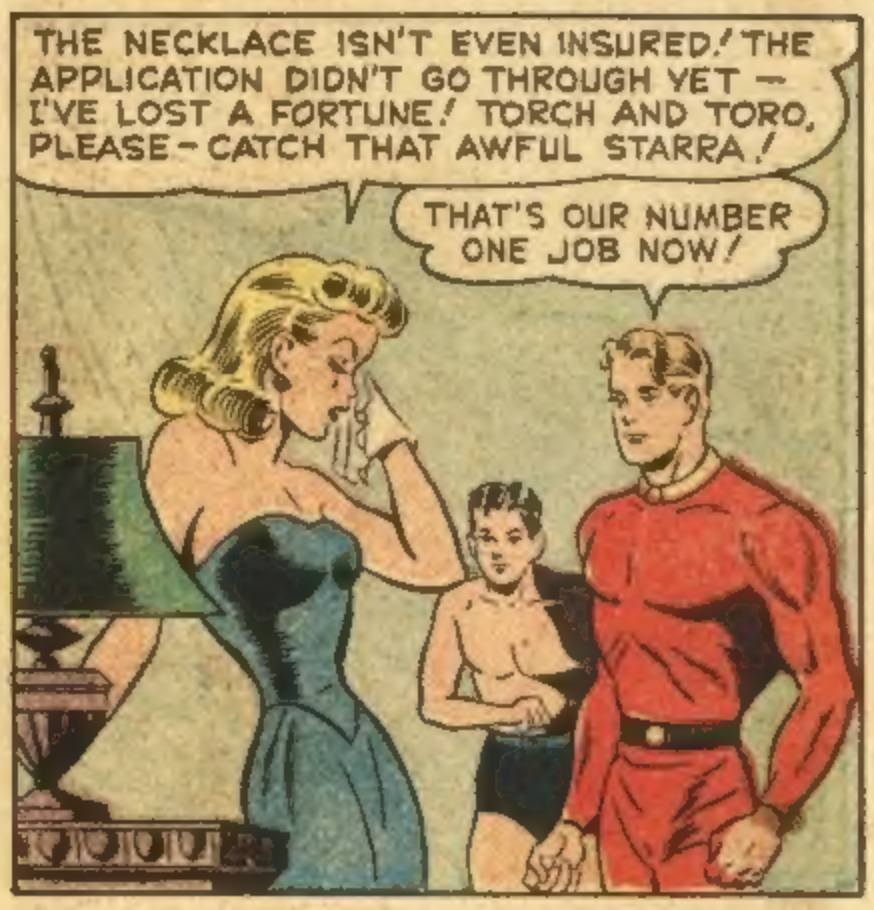
AND A NICE COZY SWIMMING POOL FOR YOU! *THE CAR, BOYS!*

A SPEEDING CAR CATCHES THE CATAPULTING CRIME FEMME!

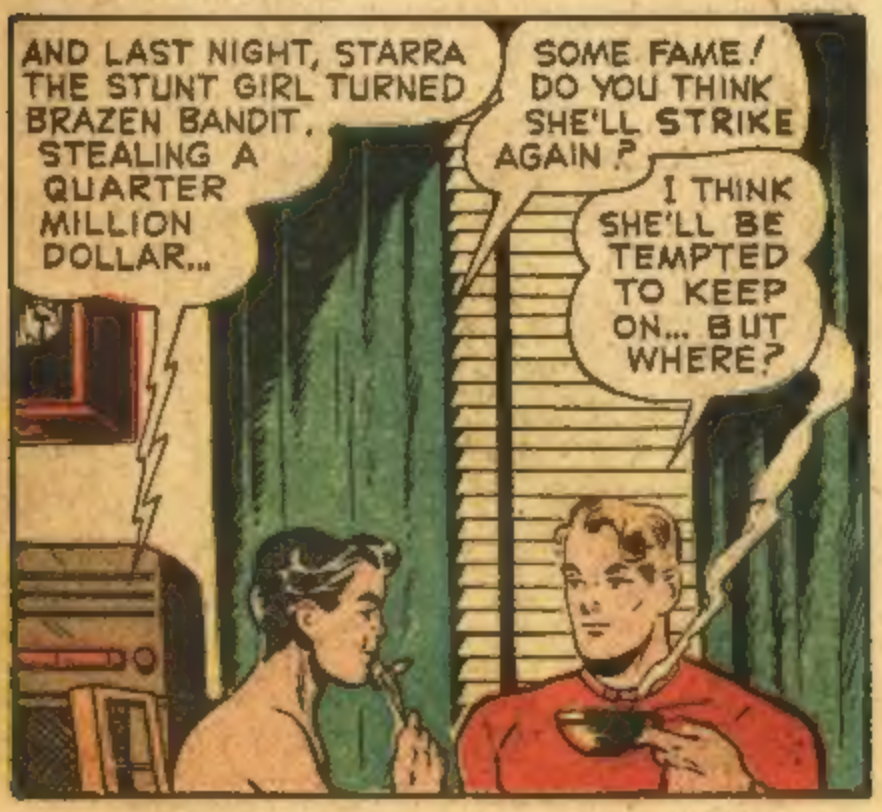


MEANWHILE, THE THWARTED DUO IS COMING UP FOR AIR...




THE NECKLACE ISN'T EVEN INSURED! THE APPLICATION DIDN'T GO THROUGH YET — I'VE LOST A FORTUNE! TORCH AND TORO, PLEASE - CATCH THAT AWFUL STARRA!
THAT'S OUR NUMBER ONE JOB NOW!

NEXT MORNING, IN THEIR HOLLYWOOD HOTEL ROOM... ...


AND LAST NIGHT, STARRA THE STUNT GIRL TURNED BRAZEN BANDIT, STEALING A QUARTER MILLION DOLLAR...
SOME FAME! DO YOU THINK SHE'LL STRIKE AGAIN?
I THINK SHE'LL BE TEMPTED TO KEEP ON... BUT WHERE?

AND NOW WE PRESENT THOSE DELIGHTFUL HEART-WARMING CREATURES, "THE HOKUM FAMILY" IN OUR REGULAR FRIDAY FEATURE...
FRIDAY! THAT'S RIGHT! TORRID TAMALES! LET'S GO, TORO!
HUH?

FRIDAY'S PAYROLL DAY AT SUPERMONT! ANOTHER QUARTER MILLION—*IN CASH!* STARRA KNOWS THAT!

GOSH, SHE'S APT TO! THERE GO THE MESSENGER AND GUARD!

SUPERMONT

BUT SUDDENLY!

THAT WALL! IT'S COLLAPSING!

UNFLAME! WE'LL GRAB THE LAMP-POSTS!

SO FAR SO GOOD!

SET #3 MERRIE ENGLAND

YE OLDE TUMBLE INN

WITH BULLET-WHIP SPEED...

THERE! THAT DOES IT! LUCKY THESE LAMP-POSTS ARE PORTABLE! *HEY!* *WHAT'S THAT?*

WHIZZZZZZ

THANKS, SUPERMONT!

FLAMING FAST, THE METEORIC DUO SPEEDS INTO BLAZING PURSUIT...

HAVE A HOT SEAT!

ULP!

BUT THE UNSEATED STARRA FINDS NEW ANCHOR!

HA! HA! HA!

SHE WHO LAUGHS LAST...

...CRIES FIRST!

OH!

STARRA!

A SURPRISE LIGHTNING TURNABOUT, AND THE STUNTER TURNS THE TABLES!

SO SWEET OF YOU TO COME BY, ADRIENNE! YES, I CARRY A GUN FOR EMERGENCIES! ONE MOVE, FLAME BIRDS, AND SHE DIES! JUST STAND, UNFLAMED!

AS THE STYMIED DUO IS FORCED TO OBEY...

TAKE CARE OF THEM, BOYS!

WITH PLEASURE, STARRA!

I'VE DECIDED TO TAKE DEAR ADRIENNE WITH US! SPEED ON, BOYS!

WHEN THE DOWNED DUO RECOVERS...

TOUGH LUCK! THEY ESCAPED - AGAIN!

TORCH! LOOK!

LUMINOUS TIRE TRACKS! THAT OVERTURNED BUCKET CONTAINED LUMINOUS PAINT! THE CAR RODE THROUGH IT! COME ON, LAD! WE'LL FOLLOW THE TRAIL!

A MILE AWAY, IN A HOUSE PERCHED ON A HILL...

NOW, ADRIENNE, YOU SIT BY WATCHING ***MY*** SHOW! ***HA!*** WHAT A CHEAP NECKLACE YOU'RE WEARING TODAY! I HAVE A LOVELY EMERALD ONE! NOW, TO ***REHEARSE*** MY ***NEXT*** JOB!

POIFECT! YA DIDN'T GET A SCRATCH!

GET YER GUN!

AS WEAPONS WHIP FROM THUG POCKETS!

WARM HERE, ISN'T IT?

YIII!

THE TORCH! THANK HEAVENS!

NOW IT'S COLD... COLD WATER! WE WERE READY, IN CASE OF SPECIAL COMPANY!

As the doused pair tumbles, a trap door yawns open!

AND ANOTHER TWEAK OF THE BRONZE LION'S TAIL FELLED YOU LIONS! CUTE, HUH?

Moments after... the duo revives, bound by asbestos ropes!

WE'RE CLEARING OUT FOR GOOD! WE'VE NEW, BETTER HEADQUARTERS! I MEAN— FOR GOOD! I'VE SET A TIME BOMB THAT EXPLODES IN 20 MINUTES! FAREWELL!

TICK! TICK!

TORCH, ISN'T THERE SOME WAY TO GET OUT OF THESE ROPES?

WE'LL DIE!

I'VE AN IDEA! THIS IS A POOL... THAT WHEEL MUST BE THE WATER TURN-ON... ADRIENNE, IF I CAN GET THAT DOUBLE STRAND NECKLACE YOU'RE WEARING...

IT HAS A WEAK CATCH— BUT HOW? WHY?

Torch tugs with strong teeth!

IT'S LONG ENOUGH— HOPE THIS WORKS— IT'S OUR ONLY CHANCE!

THE TRAPPED FIREBRAND TRIES A DARING TRICK... HURLING THE ORNAMENTAL "ROPE"!

TORCH AGAIN TUGS—THE HANDLE TURNS—AND INTO THE POOL POURS THE DELUGE! IN MOMENTS...

IT'S FILLING UP! THE WATER'S SWELLING OUR ROPES—LOOSENING THEM! WE'LL TRY WORKING FREE!

TICK! TICK!

IN SWIFT TIME.

MADE IT! WE'LL UNTIE YOU, ADRIENNE!

HURRY, BEFORE I BLOW UP OR DROWN! IT'S NEARLY TIME FOR THAT BOMB TO...

TWO MINUTES LATER...

WE GOT OUT—JUST IN TIME!

I'VE NEVER HAD A CLOSER SCRAPE WITH DEATH IN MY LIFE!

WE'VE STILL GOT A JOB—TO FIND THAT GANG! THEY DITCHED THE CAR! NO MORE LUMINOUS TRACKS.

STARRA WAS PRACTICING LEAPING THROUGH A MIRROR! IT HAD TO DO WITH HER NEXT JOB! CAN THAT TELL YOU ANYTHING?

MIRROR? MIRADOR CLUB! ALL MIRROR DOORS! THEY GET A BIG PLAY AT NIGHT—A BIG CASH TAKE! I BET STARRA'S PLANNING TO TAKE PLENTY!

THAT NIGHT, IN AN ALLEYWAY NEAR THE MIRADOR...

I'LL LEAP THROUGH THE MIRROR DOOR AND GRAB THE SWAG!

THEN!

TRY LEAPING THROUGH THIS FLAME CURTAIN!

TORCH!

WE'RE TRAPPED!

NOT LONG AFTER, AT HEADQUARTERS...

TORCH AND TORO ARE WONDERFUL! I'VE MY EMERALD NECKLACE BACK!

AND SUPER-MONT HAS ITS PAYROLL!

AND WE'VE A CRIME RING LOCKED UP! COME SEE YOUR GIRL FRIEND, TORCH AND TORO!

WELL, STARRA, YOU'VE PERFORMED YOUR LAST STUNT! YOU SHOULD HAVE PAID ATTENTION TO THAT FILM WE DID! "CRIME DOESN'T PAY"!

THE END

SUB-MARINER

SHANGHAI! TEEMING WITH A VAST POPULATION, FROM EVERY NATION IN THE WORLD! HERE THE CULTURES OF TWO WORLDS MINGLE, AS THE MIGHTY **SUB-MARINER** AND **NAMORA** FIND PERILOUS ADVENTURE WHEN THEY MEET THE BEAUTIFUL BUT CRUEL "WHITE FLOWER" AND BATTLE...

"The PIRATES of the CHINA SEA!"

ON SHANGHAI NO HOME IS BETTER KNOWN THAN THAT OF THE BEARDED AND VENERABLE SUN YAT. ON THIS DAY SUN YAT WELCOMES TWO VISITORS...

SUB-MARINER AND NAMORA! IT HAS BEEN TOO LONG SINCE THESE OLD EYES HAVE LOOKED UPON YOU! YOU MAKE MY HEART GLAD!

IT'S BEEN ALMOST TWO YEARS SINCE...

AH, YES — TWO YEARS! BUT I CAN REMEMBER, AS THOUGH SCARCELY AN HOUR PASSED! THAT IS A FAILING OF THE OLD! THEY REMEMBER TOO WELL!

"IN THOSE DAYS MY HEART WAS HEAVY WITH SORROW! MY SON, LI PO, REFUSED TO FOLLOW IN THE PATH OF HIS FATHERS..."

HI, POP! I'M RUNNING AWFUL LOW ON CASH! HOW ABOUT ADVANCING SOMETHING AGAINST MY ALLOWANCE?

NO, MY SON!

YOUR STUDIES ARE FINISHED! NOW THE DAY HAS COME WHEN YOU MUST WORK FOR YOUR LIVELIHOOD! THERE IS A PLACE FOR YOU IN THIS ANCIENT AND HONORABLE PROFESSION!

DON'T MAKE ME LAUGH, POP! SILK EXPORTING ISN'T FOR ME! I'M LOOKING FOR SOMETHING WITH A FUTURE!

THEN YOU MUST CHOOSE, MY SON! I WILL NO LONGER INDULGE YOU IN YOUR IDLE PLEASURES!

"OF COURSE I KNEW WHY MY SON LOOKED UPON THE WAYS OF THE EAST WITH CONTEMPT... IT WAS BECAUSE OF NEW FOUND FRIENDS FROM THE WEST!"

HE MUST LEARN THE TRUTH FOR HIMSELF. IF I SPEAK, HE WILL TURN AGAINST ME FOREVER!

"THOSE WERE DAYS WHEN MY NEED OF MY SON WAS GREAT!"

THAT CHINESE JUNK IS HEADED FOR US! IT'S WHITE FLOWER!

KILL EVERYONE WHO RESISTS! THEN DYNAMITE THE SHIP!

AN EXPLOSION!

BOOM!

IT CAN'T BE FAR AWAY, NAMOR!

HURRY, NAMORA!

A CARGO SHIP! IT'S SINKING!

SOME SURVIVORS ARE STILL IN THE WATER!

WHAT HAPPENED?

WE WERE ATTACKED BY *WHITE FLOWER!* SHE SCUTTLED OUR SHIP!

SHE WENT THAT WAY!

STAY HERE, NAMORA, AND FINISH THE RESCUE JOB! I'M GOING AFTER WHITE FLOWER!

A GOOD HAUL, WHITE FLOWER! THIS LOAD OF SILK IS WORTH TEN GRAND! YOU SURE CAN SMELL OUT THE PROFITABLE CARGOES!

I HAVE MY OWN METHODS! THAT IS WHY I AM LEADER!

YOU WON'T BE LEADER MUCH LONGER!

SUB-MARINER!

SEIZE HIM! DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE!

WHO'S TRYING TO ESCAPE?

OWW!

THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH HIRING INEFFICIENT HELPERS! I HAVE TO DO *EVERYTHING* MYSELF!

OOHH!

THAT TAKES CARE OF HIM! *FULL SPEED AHEAD!*

BUT THE WATER RESTORES THE SUB-MARINER'S STRENGTH, AND HE FIGHTS BACK TO THE SURFACE!

NO SIGN OF THE CHINESE JUNK! WHITE FLOWER'S GONE!

NO SAILBOAT COULD DISAPPEAR SO FAST! HER CRAFT MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH HIGH-POWERED MOTORS! SHE IS USING MODERN METHODS IN HER OLD FASHIONED PIRACY!

"AT LENGTH, I WAS FORCED TO ACT TO HALT THE RUINOUS LOSSES... MY SON HAD TO KNOW THE TRUTH..."

YOU SENT FOR ME, POP?

YES, MY SON! I HAVE TRIED MY BEST TO KEEP FROM YOU THE SERIOUSNESS OF OUR POSITION!

WE HAVE LOST MANY THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS WORTH OF SILK IN THE RAID OF WHITE FLOWER! ANOTHER LOSS AND WE SHALL BE FORCED INTO BANKRUPTCY! I KNOW HOW YOU DESPISE THE BUSINESS OF YOUR ANCESTORS!

BUT I MUST DEMAND THAT YOU SAIL WITH OUR NEXT CARGO! IT MUST BE PROTECTED AGAINST WHITE FLOWER AT ANY COST!

SOUNDS EXCITING, POP! I'LL GIVE IT A WHIRL!

MEANWHILE...

NO CLUE IN THE SHIPPING RECORDS! WHITE FLOWER HAS PIRATED VESSELS BELONGING TO *EVERY* COMPANY IN SHANGHAI!

HERE'S SOMETHING PECULIAR, PRINCE NAMOR!

THE CARGO MANIFESTS SHOW THAT A SHIPMENT OF SILK FROM SUN YAT, AN EXPORTER, HAS BEEN ON *EVERY* SHIP WHITE FLOWER HAS ROBBED!

HMM! IT'S HAPPENED TOO OFTEN TO BE A COINCIDENCE!

WE'LL FIND OUT WHEN SUN YAT IS MAKING HIS NEXT SHIPMENT!

AND WE'LL KEEP A CLOSE EYE ON THE CARGO SHIP THAT CARRIES IT!

CHIN SHIP CO

"I SHALL NOT FORGET THAT FIRST MEETING! YOU PERSUADED ME NOT TO INFORM THE HARBOR POLICE, WHICH I PLANNED TO DO TO SAFEGUARD MY SON!"

IT MIGHT FRIGHTEN OFF WHITE FLOWER! THIS IS ONE TIME WE *WANT* HER TO STRIKE!

I FEEL THAT MY SON, AND MY WEALTH, BOTH ARE SAFE IN YOUR HANDS! MAY FORTUNE SMILE UPON YOU!

"FORTUNE WAS SMILING THAT DAY, THIRTY MILES AT SEA..."

IT'S WHITE FLOWER AND HER PIRATE JUNK!

SHE'S GAINING ON US! CAN'T WE GO ANY FASTER?

THE BOILERS ARE TAKING ALL THE STEAM THEY CAN HANDLE NOW! THIS SHIP WASN'T BUILT FOR SPEED!

THEN WE MUST *FIGHT!* THEY MUST NOT GET ABOARD!

UHHH!

THAT FOOL WILL PAY WITH HIS LIFE!

SOON, ON THE DECK OF THE CARGO SHIP..

MY EYES DECEIVE ME! IT-IT CANNOT BE *YOU!*

SO YOU RECOGNIZE ME? THAT IS *UNFORTUNATE FOR YOU!*

YOUR USEFULNESS IS AT AN END, SNIVELING FOOL!

YOU'RE A LITTLE SLOW ON THE TRIGGER!

WHA...?

BUT THAT'S JUST LIKE A WOMAN—ALWAYS STOPPING TO TALK, WHEN THERE'S NEED FOR *ACTION!*

UGH!

YOU KNOW THIS WOMAN AND THIS MAN?

I KNOW THEM! I THOUGHT THEY WERE MY FRIENDS! I WAS A FOOL—I TRIED TO ADOPT THE WAYS OF THE WEST—TO BE MODERN!

SHE *USED YOU* TO LEARN THE TIME OF YOUR FATHER'S SHIPMENTS! HE SUSPECTED HER, YET HE COULD NOT SPEAK FOR FEAR OF TURNING YOU AGAINST HIM! YOU HAD TO LEARN THE TRUTH FOR YOURSELF!

MY HEAD IS BOWED IN SHAME! I KNOW NOW THAT NO MAN CAN DENY HIS HERITAGE!

AND SO WE RETURN TO THE PRESENT TIME.

YOU SUMMONED ME, FATHER?

YES, MY SON! I THOUGHT PERHAPS YOU WOULD WISH TO MEET TWO OLD FRIENDS!

THIS HUMBLE HEART IS FILLED WITH GLADNESS!

MY SON HAS RETURNED TO THE WAYS OF HIS ANCESTORS! HE IS MOST USEFUL AND WISE IN BUSINESS TOO! WE PROSPER GREATLY!

IN OTHER WORDS, IT'S NOT A BAD RACKET! WE'RE DOING OKAY, EH, BOY?

HA! HA!

IT SEEMS THE EAST HAS LEARNED SOMETHING FROM THE WEST TOO! AS IT SHOULD BE!

THE END

YES! IN ANCIENT SHANGHAI THE CULTURES OF TWO DIFFERENT WORLDS MEET AND MINGLE... AND THAT IS AS IT SHOULD BE!

REMEMBER!
the
FINEST,
FUNNIEST,
MOST EXCITING,
MOST INTERESTING,
Comic
MAGAZINES
YOU CAN BUY ARE THE
MARVEL GROUP
MAGAZINES
MARTIN GOODMAN
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STAN LEE
EDITOR

By Kent B. Stiles

A geography and an encyclopaedia are essential tools for the stamp collector who would intelligently pursue his hobby. The newest among the titles of stamp-issuing administrations is "Tokelau Islands." The answers to the question "What and where are the Tokelau Islands?" probably could not have been correctly given by one in a million persons prior to a recent day when the postal authorities of New Zealand announced that, for the first time, special stamps are to be issued for use by the people who inhabit those islands.

That announcement caused collectors to do some research, because future stamp albums will provide spaces for these promised bits of postal paper: half-penny chocolate and violet, a village scene on Atafu; 1p brown and blue-green a hut on Nukunono; and 2p green and blue, a village scene on Fakaofo.

Atlases and other reference works show that Atafu, Nukunono and Fakaofo are tiny atolls lying 350 miles northeast of Samoa in the Pacific Ocean. Together they form the Tokelau (Union) Islands, seven miles square in area and with a population of about 2,000. Great Britain transferred Tokelau to New Zealand in 1926 and the islands have since been administered under the authority of Western Samoa, which is a territory controlled by New Zealand.

The Tokelau stamps are being printed in London, and it was stated at Wellington, capital of New Zealand, that the series would be made available probably in December, although it will be early in 1948 before the stamps are actually placed in use in the Tokelau Islands.

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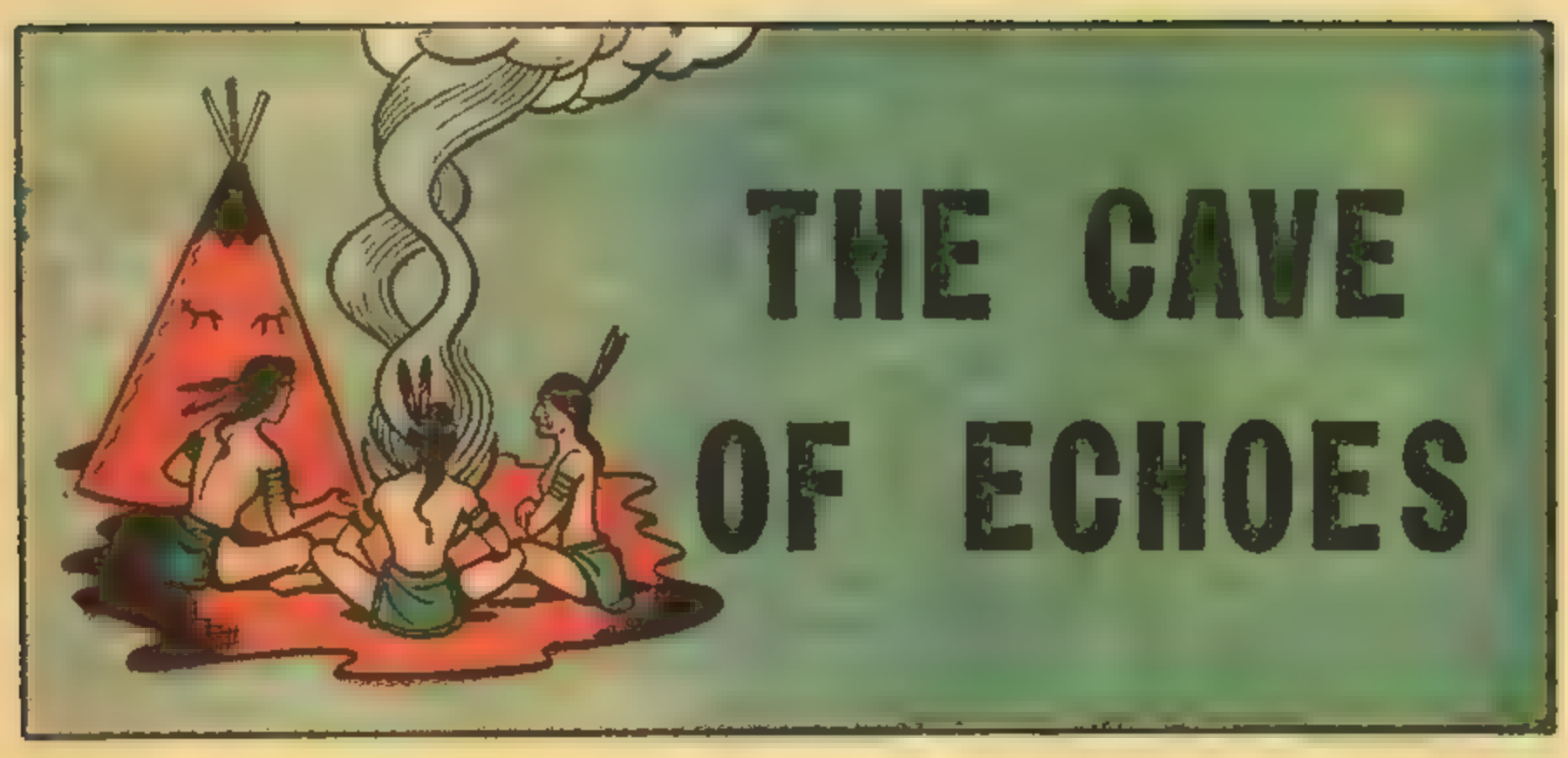
The New Zealand postal officials announced also that 1p, 2p and 6p stamps, and probably a 3p, are to be issued to commemorate the centennial of New Zealand's Otago Province. It was in 1848 that English emigrants arrived in Otago's Port Chalmers Harbor and settled there.



THE CAVE OF ECHOES

"A BIT to the nor' east . . . mebbe round the bend."

That's what the townsfolk will tell you when you ask about the Cave of Echoes. And no more. Though, if you're of a curious turn of mind, you're likely as not to hear snatches of gossip here and there: the part-legend, part-fairy-tale that has grown up round the secret of the cave.

Like many an outsider, Flip Blake turned a skeptic ear toward the stories. Flip was a reporter, on vacation in our Canadian mountains. And he'd had enough of stories in the workaday world . . . or so he said.

Still, the echoes of the cave are echoes which cannot easily be silenced, even in the mind of a skeptic like Flip.

Though, in the daytime, cynicism is quickly adopted. For this is the territory that the Indians once christened, "The Land of the Golden Hunt". And when the sun rises, it *is* golden—from the glimmering St. Lawrence to the highest tip of the highest mountain. Daylight floods it slowly, as if in fear of what the night will bring. But slowly the blush rose tints fade into a deeper orange, a still deeper blue-purple. Till night is upon us.

And with the night come the echoes.

None of the townsfolk has ever ventured close enough to tell exactly what the echoes are. Though there's many a tale . . .

"The ghosts of the pioneers come to plague us for tearin' down the forests and smokin' up the country," say some.

Others have it that the cave is a symbol of God's wrath on earth. Still others point to the smoke which sometimes rises from the region of the cave, and shake their heads, saying not a word.

In the time I tell about, the outside world had somehow heard about our cave. And a slick New York magazine had sent up a crew of photographers to "capture" the phenomenon for mass perusal. But none in our town would have a thing to do with it. Not a guide was to be had. The cave was the cave, and whether it be haunted by pioneers, or by the wrath of God, we were a'feard. So the photographers returned to New York, and we returned to our ways.

Only Flip Blake, among us, found his appetite whetted by the advent of a "news possibility."

When the photographers had left, Flip hied himself to the mountains. Slept till midnight in a broken-down shack he discovered by the side of the mountain which was said to harbor the Cave of Echoes. But sharp at midnight he was awakened by a series of shrieks that pierced his skull and made him clutch for the gun he'd brought along. .

But Flip has courage. And in the midst of that dead blackness, he stepped out to follow the trail of the echo.

Most of the way he crawled on all fours, his gun dragging along behind him. It was a steep trail he followed, overgrown with briers and half-lost by dead trunks. And the Indians hadn't called it "The Land of the Golden *Hunt*" for nothing. Once Flip was frightened by what sounded like the call of a wolf. Again, a bear crossed his path, so close he could feel the hot breath upon him.

The other sounds, the echoes, kept getting louder and louder as well, till Flip said they pounded like drum beats against his heart. But he could tell by the increasing volume that he was nearing his objective.

Then, it happened—the unforeseen . . . Flip fell . . . At least 30 feet he estimated later when he told me the whole story.

"It was like a tornado blasting through my lungs," he said. "Lucky I had enough sense to shove out my hands and grab."

What Flip "grabbed" was a stump growing out from the side of the steep cliff down

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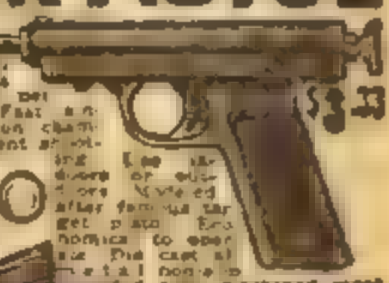

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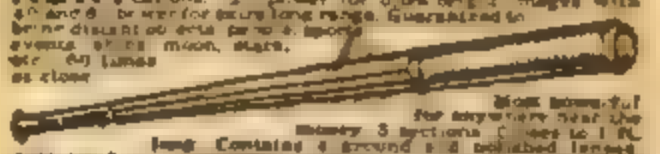

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which hed fallen. When he got to his senses, he discovered he was hanging just above a narrow path, shimmering clear in the moonlight which could be seen now, and apparently well-worn.

He noticed, too, that the echoes were no longer echoes, but definite sounds. And he hadn't been mistaken. They were drum beats, real drum beats! But with them, came also a strange, primitive music rising soft and wistful into the air. It was a haunting melody, sad and somehow out of tune with the shrieks he was certain he'd heard before.

Flip finally jumped to the path, and for the first time noticed the waterfall. The water came from high above, probably the very top of the mountain, washing down as far as his eye could reach into the valley, and cutting off an entire section of the path.

He was beginning to wonder how he was to get back, if at all, when the strangest thing yet happened. A woman came running directly out of the falls! And seconds later, a man came running out after her.

But they were the strangest couple he had ever seen—bronze-colored and glittering with ancient finery. Heavy silver jangled from the neck of the girl, and the boy trailed a long series of brightly-colored feathers behind him. In the half-darkness, their teeth glistened.

Still calm, or at least appearing so, he approached them—but when they saw him coming, they were frightened, and ducked once again beneath the falls.

Flip followed, doing as they had done, running directly through the path of the waterfall. And there he came upon the secret of the cave.

Once through the waterfall, Flip found himself in the midst of what loked like a ceremony. A mammoth fire was burning, lighting the walls of the cave till they glistened like mercury in the night. Great bronze men stood crouching about drums round the circle of the fire. Sitting to one side were the women, heavy and set and sad. And off in the shadows were the couple who had led him to the secret.

It couldn't be. Yet Flip saw no other explanation. It must be . . . it was . . . an ancient Indian tribal celebration! And his mind quickly took in the significance of the story he had so oddly stumbled upon in our Canadian backwoods Already he saw the presses rolling: *CAVE OF ECHOES by FLIP BLAKE. Indian tribe discovered in ancient glory unhampered by modern civilization . . .*

But the Cave of Echoes had still another story to tell. The Chieftain approached Flip with his hand in the air to signify he meant a peaceful overture.

Flip raised his hand in return.

"No white man ever here, you understand?" The Chief said.

Flip nodded his head.

"These get married," he pointed to the young couple.

Flip liked the story better and better. Wedding nuptials! Once again, he revised the double banner head in his mind.

"You come sit in wedding—but you no tell." The chief was being cagey. Then, noting Flip's reticence, he went on in the longest speech yet. "We last true Indian tribe of America. We real, honest, good. We no want fight. We want just be true Indian tribe."

Flip saw the anxious faces raised all about him. "Chicken-hearted," he muttered to himself. But he made the promise, and was elected blood-brother of the tribe, and joined in the merry-making during the last of the marriage rite.

And when he returned to the town, he told me the story I have set down here—but he told no one else. So the secret of the Cave of Echoes is kept to this day. And if you're curious about the cave, and ask the townsfolk about the part-legend, part-fairy-tale, they'll tell you, "It's a bit to the nor' east . . . mebbe round the bend." But nothing more.

THE END SL-2130

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, AS AMENDED BY THE ACTS OF MARCH 3, 1933, AND JULY 2, 1946

of The Human Torch published Quarterly at Meriden, Conn. for October 1, 1947.

State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared Martin Goodman, who, having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of the The Human Torch and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily, weekly, semiweekly or triweekly newspaper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption required by the act of August 24 1912, as amended by the acts of March 3, 1933, and July 3, 1946 (section 337, Postal Laws and Regulations), printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are. Publisher, Cornell Publishing Corp., 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N Y.; Editor, Stan Lee, 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N Y., Managing Editor, Stan Lee 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N Y.; Business Manager, Martin Goodman, 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N Y

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one percent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.)

Cornell Publishing Corp., 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N. Y., Martin Goodman, 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N Y., Jean Goodman, 350 5th Avenue, New York 1, N Y

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding 1 percent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are. (If there are none, so state.)

None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting is given, also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's full knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner, and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the twelve months preceding the date shown above is ..... (This information is required from daily, weekly, semiweekly, and triweekly newspapers only.)

(Signed) MARTIN GOODMAN

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 16th day of September, 1947

(SEAL) SYLVIA FIEGEN

(My commission expires March 30, 1949.)

THE HUMAN TORCH

BEHIND EACH PEAL OF HEARTY LAUGHTER LIES AN UNEXPECTED TEAR! THROUGH THE VEINS OF THE GREATEST FUNNYMAN FLOWS THE BLOOD OF A TRAGIC HEART! THE **TORCH** AND **TORO** PLAY A DARING ROLE OF THEIR OWN AS A BRAZEN KILLER THREATENS THAT

"YOU'LL DIE LAUGHING!"

SL-2273

UP UNTIL NOW, "ALL FOR LAUGHS" HAS BEEN EVERYTHING A MATINEE AUDIENCE EXPECTS OF THE COUNTRY'S BEST REPERTORY PLAYERS— AND HUBERT HUMPERDINCK IN PARTICULAR... THE WORLD'S GREATEST COMEDIAN!

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, SUPPOSE FOR A MOMENT WE PAUSE TO CONSIDER THE NATURE OF COMEDY...

THROUGH THE VEINS OF THE GREATEST FUNNYMEN FLOWS THE BLOOD OF TRAGIC HUMAN BEINGS!

WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH HIM, JOHN?

I CAN SEE YOU ALL EXPECT LAUGHS—*ALL* OF YOU! HUBERT HUMPERDINCK, THE CLUMSY LOVER, THE LUDICROUS HERO, THE TUNELESS MUSICIAN!

BUT WATCH CAREFULLY! THE SCRIPT SAYS THAT I SHALL FIGHT THE HERO FOR THE LOVE OF THE HEROINE... AND END UP WITH MY FACE IN THE SOUP, SO TO SPEAK!

THIS OUGHT TO BE GOOD, TORO! HUBERT IS A MASTER AT TURNING SOMETHING SERIOUS INTO LAUGHS!

BUT SUPPOSING, *INSTEAD*, I REALLY *HIT* THE HERO, OUR ACTOR-MANAGER, JOHN DRAKE!

THAT LEFT *WASN'T* A LAUGHING MATTER!

AND TAKE THE LOVELY CYNTHIA PALMER INTO MY ARMS... *THEN NO LONGER AM I THE BUFFOON!*

OH!

CURTAIN! QUICK!

HOW'S THAT FOR DRAMA—EVEN IF IT ISN'T WHAT WE PAID OUR MONEY FOR?

I NEVER BEFORE REALIZED HOW A MAN MUST FEEL WHO MAKES HIS LIVING PLAYING THE FOOL!

YOU AREN'T FORGETTING OUR INVITATION, ARE YOU, TORCH?

NO! AND ESPECIALLY NOT AFTER WHAT'S JUST HAPPENED! I WANT TO KNOW "WHY" THIS SUDDEN TRANSFORMATION IN MY FAVORITE COMEDIAN!

Dear Torch and Toro— Why don't you drop around backstage after the matinee? Love to see you again— Cynthia

MEANWHILE, BACKSTAGE...

WHY DID YOU DO IT, HUBERT?

IT'S HARD TO EXPLAIN, CYNTHIA!

HUBERT, I WANT TO SEE YOU IN YOUR DRESSING ROOM, LATER!

CYNTHIA, I COULDN'T TELL YOU WITH JOHN HERE, BUT I AM TERRIBLY FOND OF YOU! I BELIEVE I'VE BEEN IN LOVE WITH YOU FOR OVER A YEAR!

OH...?

YOU NEVER SAW ME SERIOUSLY AS I *AM!* AS I *FEEL* WHEN I PLAY THE CLOWN! THIS FACE OF MINE MAKES THE WORLD LAUGH! EVEN MY NAME...

BUT YOU'VE MADE THE WORLD HAPPY FOR 15 YEARS!

DON'T YOU KNOW *WHY* I'VE MADE AUDIENCES HAPPY? BECAUSE INTO MY COMEDY GOES THE SOLDIER I'D LIKE TO BE, THE LOVER I IMAGINE WHEN I AM ALONE, THE BEAUTIFUL SONG I MIGHT SING!

*"MY COMEDY GREW OUT OF PATHOS, CYNTHIA — THE **CHILD** WHO WAS ALWAYS THE UGLY DUCKLING — AND THE **MAN** WHO COULD NEVER FOLLOW HIS HEART..."*

YOU *CAN'T* PLAY PRINCE CHARMING, HUBERT! PRINCE CHARMING NEVER HAD A NOSE LIKE YOURS — OR SUCH *HUGE* EARS!

I WISH I WAS DEAD!

JOHNNY

MARY

BUT OF COURSE I *DIDN'T* DIE... EVEN IF I *DIDN'T* STOP FEELING AND WISHING UNDER MY CLOWN'S COSTUME! WHAT I DID TODAY I COULDN'T HELP— THAT WORRIES ME!

I FRIGHTENED HER... SHE CAN'T SEE ANYTHING BUT THE CLOWN! AND SHE *NEVER WILL*, UNTIL JOHN DRAKE STOPS BILLING ME AS A FUNNYMAN!

ALL RIGHT, YOU FOOL! WHAT'S THE TROUBLE?

I'M SORRY, JOHN! NOTHING'S WRONG WITH ME, THOUGH, EXCEPT AN OBSESSION TO BE *SERIOUS!*

THIS TIME I *WON'T* TAKE *NO* FOR AN ANSWER! I'VE *GOT* TO BE GIVEN A CHANCE IN YOUR LEAD TONIGHT! I KNOW THE PART PERFECTLY!

HA! HA! HA! PRICELESS! *YOU* AS MICHAEL!

YOU A MODERN HAMLET—SO SENSITIVE THAT YOU TAKE YOUR OWN LIFE! PLAYING OPPOSITE CYNTHIA PALMER WHO'S SUPPOSED TO LOVE *YOU*, A FLOP-EARED EGOTIST!

DON'T JOKE TOO MUCH, JOHN!

YOU HAVE A CONTRACT TO PLAY A *FOOL*, AND... *HUBERT!*

I MUST DO SOMETHING... GET JOHN OUT OF THE THEATRE!

A FEW MINUTES LATER, NEAR THE STAGE DOOR...

PRETTY LARGE TRUNK FOR ONE MAN TO HANDLE, HUBERT! LET ME HELP YOU!

OH! WHY, YES! THANK YOU, TORCH!

HEAVY, TOO! CAR AROUND HERE SOMEPLACE?

ER... I'LL JUST LEAVE IT OUT HERE FOR AWHILE!

I CAN'T TELL ANYONE YET! I HAVE TO THINK! I'LL TELL THE POLICE TOMORROW... PERHAPS NEXT WEEK!

STAGE

THEN, AFTER LEAVING HUBERT...

HELLO, YOU TWO! QUITE A PERFORMANCE, WASN'T IT? POOR HUBERT GOT A BIT OUT OF HAND, I'M AFRAID!

SO WE NOTICED, CYNTHIA!

IT'S PRETTY COMPLICATED WITH HUBERT! HE SAYS IT'S ALL BECAUSE HE'S IN LOVE WITH ME... AND THAT I HAVE NO FEELINGS FOR A FUNNYMAN!

COULD YOU, CYNTHIA?

HARD TO SAY! HUBERT IS ONE OF THE FINEST PERSONS I HAVE EVER KNOWN! I EVEN FIND HIS HOMELY FACE PLEASANT! THE ONLY THING THAT BOTHERS ME IS HIS ACTING THE *FOOL* PROFESSIONALLY!

COULDN'T HE PLAY SERIOUS PARTS OF A CERTAIN TYPE?

POSSIBLY! BUT I'M SURE JOHN DRAKE WOULD NEVER LET HIM MAKE THE CHANGE!

COME ON, CYNTHIA, YOU COULD USE SOME FRESH AIR BEFORE YOU GET BACK FOR THE SHOW TONIGHT!

ALL RIGHT, AS LONG AS YOU GET ME BACK BY 8 O'CLOCK!

BUT AS IT HAPPENS CYNTHIA DOES NOT GET BACK TO THE THEATRE ON TIME! WHILE ON THE STAGE THAT EVENING, HUBERT ENACTS THE TRAGIC ROLE OF A WAR REFUGEE...

WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO MY HOME... ONCE A PLACE OF PEACE AND COMFORT! NOW A SHAMBLES! THE WAR...

WHERE'S CYNTHIA? I CAN'T PLAY THE NEXT SCENE ALONE!

I NEVER IMAGINED HE HAD A TALENT FOR TRAGEDY!

SHHH!

IT'S VERY QUIET HERE NOW... DESOLATE! THE COMFORTS ARE ALL GONE!

I'LL *HAVE* TO PLAY IT ALONE... AND PERHAPS IT'S BEST THAT WAY!

A ONE ACT TRAGEDY INSTEAD OF THREE— MY *OWN*— PLAYED AS I NEVER EXPECTED TO PLAY IT!

BACKSTAGE...

A MADHOUSE! YOU LATE! JOHN DRAKE MISSING... AND HUBERT OUT THERE PLAYING MICHAEL WITHOUT SUPPORT!

HUBERT PLAYING TRAGEDY, WITH DRAKE *MISSING?*

THAT TRUNK, TORCH! DO YOU SUPPOSE...?

DASHING OUT TO THE ALLEY, TORCH FINDS...

HUBERT... HE... TRIED TO... KILL ME...

RETURNING BACKSTAGE, TORCH AND TORO PREPARE FOR ACTION!

COMEDIAN OR NOT, HE STILL ATTEMPTED MURDER! LET'S...

PLEASE— *WAIT!* LET HIM PLAY THIS HIS OWN WAY!

THE TORCH AND TORO... AND CYNTHIA! *THEY KNOW!* IT'S ALL OVER NOW EXCEPT THE FINAL GESTURE!

WITHOUT HOPE—WITHOUT LOVE—GIVEN OR RECEIVED—ALL MEN MUST CEASE TO LIVE AS I DO NOW!

QUICKLY—CURTAIN! HE'S STABBED HIMSELF!

GET A DOCTOR! HE'S HURT!

TOO LATE FOR *ANY* DOCTOR! *HUBERT IS DEAD!*

COULD IT BE HE TAUGHT US ALL A LESSON?

PERHAPS! BUT NO ONE COULD EVER KNOW AS WELL AS HUBERT HUMPERDINCK THE *TEARS* BEHIND EACH HEARTY LAUGH!

THE END

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